



MEETING SUMMARY
WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMISSION (WRAC)
KISSIMMEE BASIN WATER SUPPLY PLAN (KBWSP) REGIONAL WORKSHOP
KISSIMMEE CHAIN OF LAKES LONG TERM MANAGEMENT PLAN
Okeechobee Service Center Auditorium
205 North Parrott Avenue, Suite 201
Okeechobee, Florida 34972
April 12, 2004 – 1:00 p.m.

Attendees:

WRAC Members:

Doug Bournique	Carroll Head	Patrick Hayes
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WRAC Alternates:

Thomas Bausch	Dan Hayes
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Interested Parties:

Al Aikens	Beacham Furse	Gina Ralph
Malissa Booth	Paul Gray	Adam Stuart
Wiener Cadet	Tim Gysan	Theresa Woody
Valerie Davis	Estebah Jimenez	
Richard Earp	Linda McCarthy	

Staff:

Ashie Akpoji	Brad Jones	Keith Smith
Missie Barletto	Jennifer Jorge	Rick Smith
Khaltlah Beverly	Carla Palmer	Chris Sweazy
Jian Cai	Gary Ritter	
Chris Carlson	Kim Shugar	

1. Welcome and Introductions by Chris Carlson, Sr. Supervising Geographer, Kissimmee Division, SFWMD.

Meeting called to order at 1:10 p.m. by Chris Carlson. All attendees introduced themselves and named their affiliation. Ms. Carlson reviewed today's agenda.

2. Overview of Kissimmee Chain of Lakes Long Term Management Plan (Management Plan) (KCOL LTMP), by Chris Carlson, Sr. Supervising Geographer, Kissimmee Division.

The deadline for input to the Management Plan was the date of the meeting, April 12, 2004, but anyone attending this meeting who would like to make comments were

encouraged to submit them by Friday of that week. On overview of the proposed strategy was provided.

The purpose of holding public meetings is to identify stakeholders interested in the Plan. For the last six months partner agencies have been holding fact-finding meetings and the information has been used to develop a project charter and goals. Staff requested input on identification of the correct goals and whether the goals fully address stakeholder concerns. Staff wanted to identify who should be involved in defining what it means for this lake system to be healthy and sustainable.

The Kissimmee Chain of Lakes Long Term Management Plan was adopted by the Water Resources Advisory Commission (WRAC) resolution in April 2003 and directs SFWMD staff to work with the U. S. Army of Corps of Engineers in creating a management plan. The Plan will address stakeholder concerns and focus on improvements; development of management practices; and ensure those management practices consider potential downstream impacts.

SFWMD staff provided a complementary design to the Plan. The partner agencies to the Plan were explained and members of the partner agencies in attendance were introduced. The geographic scope of the area influenced by lake water levels was reviewed on a map. The project objectives were explained. The nine products to come out of the plan were listed.

The schedule from May 2004 through September 2006 was reviewed.

3. KCOL LTMP Objectives and Approach, by Brad Jones, Sr. Environmental Scientist, Kissimmee Division.

Mr. Jones presented information on the approach to the Plan and proposed goals. The prime directive is to ensure a healthy lake while achieving goals.

The Plan approach and development were outlined in overheads for attendees. This is the same general process that is being used in CERP; performance measures provide scientific basis for evaluation of alternatives; and performance measures will define ecosystem health and stability; and public and environmental demands for water and levels of significant harm. The goals and the relationship between each of the goals were outlined.

4. KCOL LTMP Management Plan Goals

- Hydrologic Management, by Tim Gysan, Environmental Engineer, USACE.

Mr. Gysan presented information on the goals to meet and provide level of flood protection defined in the C&SF project; and to maintain, enhance, or restore aquatic habitats to sustain fish and wildlife. Several other goals and the historical perspective were explained.

The results of Lake regulation and the current approach to the seven lake regulation schedules were discussed. The rationale for this portion of the project is to provide criteria for revision of regulation schedules to allow a more balanced approach to water management and provide benefits.

- Habitat Preservation and Enhancement, by Gina Ralph, USFWS.

Ms. Ralph presented information on the definition of the goal of the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes Management Plan and on adjacent lands to be managed.

A brief historical perspective and the rationale for the project were provided. The restoration costs are estimated to be \$8 million. The current approach was outlined.

- Aquatic Plant Management, by Jeff Schardt, FDEP.

Information on invasive aquatic plants such as hydrilla, water hyacinth, and water lettuce control was provided. In the mid-1990s hydrilla became a major problem. The optimum control and the challenges with current water schedules were presented.

Information on flow impact on Lake Toho and the considerations to adjust water volumes and discharges, as well as acknowledge reduced cost-effectiveness and increased risks. Question asked by stakeholder on the Chain of Lakes and what other lakes besides the treatment of Lake Kissimmee are the Corps working on, and Mr. Schardt provided information on the other lakes in the area where the Corps is reducing exotics.

- Water Quality Improvement, Kim Shugar, FDEP.

Ms. Shugar provided an historical perspective on the health of the Lake and what has caused the problems to the Lake. The rationale was explained on the laws required to meet water quality standards.

The current activities on the FDEP watershed management and Lake Okeechobee Protection Act and the Lake Okeechobee Protection Plan were reviewed.

- Recreation and Public Use, by Marty Mann, FWC.

The goal is to manage the Lakes and estuaries in the best possible manner.

Lake Kissimmee and Lake Toho are world-renowned fisheries and desirable hunting and excellent wildlife viewing opportunities. Information on the value of the recreational activities to the State of Florida were provided. The exiting program has about \$6.5 million from the Fish and Wildlife Commission for lake enhancements, pier construction, etc. Information on the federal and state funds was explained. The current approach on activities and maintenance was provided.

The Plan was summarized and questions from stakeholders were answered by Mr. Mann.

5. KCOL LTMP Summary, by Chris Carlson, Sr. Supervising Geographer, Kissimmee Division

Ms. Carlson said the purpose of this meeting is to identify stakeholders, request input and assist the public in providing information. The development of the Plan was again explained to the stakeholders.

A brief summary of the previous comments made by the public was provided. Concluding remarks on the document review and on “questions and comments” were explained by Ms. Carlson.

6. Comments from Counties.

Osceola County representative commented on their appreciation for the SFWMD’s effort on the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes and other estuaries. The insight and commitment has been impressive.

7. Comments from Public

Storage of water on private land is of concern to stakeholder and he suggested looking at alternatives other than Lake Okeechobee for the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes’ water.

Question from stakeholder on the volume of discharge coming out of the system into Lake Okeechobee – what it was 10 years ago, and what it is today? Documentation will be provided in the future (as soon as the science and research is available) to reference conditions that address discharges at S65, and other structures. Stakeholders provided comments on the amount of water demands on the system and management of water.

Question from stakeholder on the “planning horizon date” for this project. Ms. Carlson presented information on the Plan development process and a proposed “reconnaissance study” and once that is approved, the other projects can then move forward. Good management requires good science, so there is not a clear planning horizon. Mr. Sweazy, and Brad Jones (another project member), provided further information on regulation schedules. There is currently no timeline. When the Federal study comes out in 2008 and evaluation of the information has been completed, a planning horizon will be available.

Interested party requested information on what will be done during the next four years and Mr. Mann was able to provide information on drawdowns and mechanical removal of material. This plan is desperately needed and is on the fast track to be finalized. Mr. Schardt addressed exotic management control and the serious hydrilla problems. Mr. Mann said the plan will address some serious issues for all governmental agencies.

Commissioner Bausch asked what information can be provided to citizens on the timeline of the project. Telling the public that it will be five years before a “Plan” was ready is not sufficient to satisfy the public. Ms. Carlson provided information on what the agencies are doing to expedite what they are doing in the future. General discussion by several stakeholders on addressing timelines and what can be done to expedite the process. The agencies are working together to facilitate the Plan and move forward.

Stakeholder provided information on the constraints on existing features and structures in the Plan outlined today; and the fact that in a couple of years the Corps will be starting a Feasibility Study. The Corps has chosen not to do multiple studies in the interest of time. SFWMD staff is working as fast as possible to move the projects forward.

Per the suggestion of a stakeholder, Ms. Carlson said in future meetings of the primary partners they will end the meetings with discussions on proposed interim resolutions to measures.

Stakeholder suggestion that the project team doesn’t omit incentives on water quality and puts “teeth” in making this Plan happen.

8. On-going and Future Kissimmee Basin Water Supply Studies and Initiatives, by Chris Sweazy, Lead Planner, Water Supply Department.

Mr. Sweazy acknowledged information on the planning components from the previous presentations given today.

The regional planning areas are Kissimmee Basin, Upper East Coast, Lower East Coast and Lower West Coast. The water supply plan components include water demand assessment; evaluation of demands vs. resources; issue identification; water resource options; recommendations and funding strategies.

Presentation provided information on water use comparing 1995 with 2020. Data on ground water assessment and surface water assessment was given.

The KBWSP results estimated 10-15 feet of water level change in the Floridan system; identified potential harm to wetland systems; identified available ground water remaining for use in the southern portion of the basin; and sufficient surface water is available in the Istokpoga Basin.

There were fourteen recommendations to the Long Term Management Plan. Mr. Sweazy’s presentation focused on two of the recommendations: Hydrologic Research and Alternative Development.

Information on hydrologic data gathering, Floridan Aquifer System drilling sites, and hydrologic data types was provided. Other issues are “paired aquifer well network”,

hydrologic modeling and alternative supply development. Specific information provided on ground water modeling and the connection areas was provided. Discussion on new groundwater, reclaimed water and surface water.

The Shingle & Boggy Creek Study was briefing explained. This is a feasibility study to evaluate withdrawing water from Shingle or Boggy Creek.

The Chain of Lakes evaluation was a feasibility study of water availability from Kissimmee Chain of Lakes and an assessment of Lake Tohopekaliga and East Lake Tohopekaliga. There is a need for storage.

In the future, additional hydrologic investigations will be done. Also, continued ground water modeling enhancement; expanded study of the KCOL and tributary supply determinations; Kissimmee River availability; and ground water development in southern Polk and Osceola Counties.

Question and answer session on future activities in the Kissimmee Basin. Environmental water supply was questioned and information provided. Minimum flows and levels information was provided. Agricultural demands are projected to increase and there will be a 60% increase in overall use. Surface water storage and other water storage measures were discussed. Ground water flow models are not complete, but may be by the end of the summer of 2004.

9, Shingle Creek and Boggy Creek Tributary Analyses, by Jian Cia, Water Supply Department.

Jian Cai presented information on the estimation of available surface water in the two creeks, along with the purpose of the study and the project approach.

A map shown to the group showed that Boggy Creek contributes about 55% of the total inflow into East Lake Toho; and Shingle Creek contributes about 60% of the total inflow into Lake Toho.

An in-basin assessment identified wetland type and extent using 1995 land use cover; field verification; information on creek state and flow from USGS; and information for 1 foot elevation contours. This information showed that Boggy Creek wetland under stress for 785 acres; and Shingle Creek wetland system under stress 3357 acres.

Information on stage deficits in the creeks was provided. The average deficiency is 4.78. The downstream ecosystem findings and what occurs during dry season, showed that water needed for in-basin wetlands. Reservations need to be done for water in the amounts of 37,755 acre feet in Boggy Creek and 11,845 acre feet in Shingle Creek basin. Flow needed for the downstream.

The tools used in this study were explained. The results from this study during the time period of 1970 – 2002 was shown.

In summary, availability from Boggy Creek and Shingle Creek is estimated at 2 mgd and 6 mgd respectively for water supply. There is an 85% reliability under identified withdrawal scenarios. Limitations of in-basin wet season needs and dry season downstream needs appear to be most constraining. Potential restoration projects may improve dependability. Storage should be considered a component of any future diversion system.

Question and answer session. Increased storage will not cause flooding. In the water supply plan that will be coming out, there are already restoration plans in some areas. The 2 to 6 estimated storage is being discussed and the City of Kissimmee has provided information on needs.

10. Adjournment at 4:30 p.m. by Chris Carlson.

Jennifer Jorge, Division Director, Kissimmee, SFWMD, asked for comments on the Draft Plan be sent via e-mail or faxed to Chris Carlson by Friday.

This will be on the Agenda for the May 6, 2004 WRAC Meeting.

Paula Moree
District Deputy Clerk